



*"An Excellent Authority"*

# **HOT NEWS**

Summer 2007



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**Crash course on driving**

**MF&RS football in the BIG apple**

**New neighbourhood firefighters**

**WHY IS PETE PRICE  
ON OUR ENGINE !?**

**See inside!**



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**W**elcome to the first edition of *Hot News*, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service's quarterly employee magazine.

*It's packed with stories about people, rescues, stations and the day to day work which goes on across the whole of the Service. We hope you enjoy it and feel free to submit a contribution.*

*The magazine will be in addition to the weekly Hotline, which has also had a 'makeover', and the regular district and regional newsletters already produced for the Authority.*

**Sam Grady**  
Editor

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**CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NEXT EDITION ARE WELCOME. PLEASE EMAIL YOUR NEWS ARTICLES AND PICTURES TO [HOTLINE@MERSEYFIRE.GOV.UK](mailto:HOTLINE@MERSEYFIRE.GOV.UK)**

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# IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Knowsley District has introduced a neighbourhood firefighter at each Community Fire Station. FFs Robbie Guibertoni (Whiston Blue), Phil Hart (Kirkby Blue) and Watch Manager Mal Whipp (Huyton Blue) have taken up the role.

The firefighters are given an additional responsibility of getting involved with partnership work, such as Neighbourhood Pride teams, housing groups and resident associations. By attending meetings and getting involved with the planning of local activities and campaigns, they are ensuring that the Fire Service is at the heart of the community and engaging with the community more. It also helps operational crews be more supported in their day to day role, as other agencies can offer additional resources to help some of our campaigns and initiatives.

The scheme was set up to help local fire stations link up with other agencies who worked in the area so that a more co-ordinated response could be organised to local issues.

FF Hart is a Kirkby resident and saw the role not only helping his role as a firefighter but also helping his own local community. He said: "At first some people didn't really know if it would have any effect but we are already seeing some results. One of the things we have looked at is car fires, as we had an issue in certain parts of Kirkby. I was able to talk to the different agencies and see how we could work together to address the issue—for example, we looked at access to areas and the council have put bollards in. The number of car fires has reduced significantly. We're able to do these sorts of things because I'm able to get an instant response by going along to these meetings rather than going through the chain of command like we have done in the past.

"It's early days at the moment but I am enjoying this new role. I'm making new contacts all the time and that will be something really worthwhile for the future."

FF Guibertoni said: "I saw it as a way of extending my operational role into the community. Although there is a lot we can do as a Fire Service there is a lot more we can do in partnership with other agencies, like the Knowsley Pride Teams or the Council's clean-up service. It's been interesting. I get to meet a lot of other agencies. Sometimes you don't realise there are a lot of things that we can use to make our job easier."





## DEVASTATION OF FIRE

Two families in Kirkby had a lucky escape after a serious house fire in Northwood. Crews from Kirkby, Aintree and the City's Aerial Appliance were called to the property to tackle a fire in the roof void and two first floor rooms. The incident left the house uninhabitable and also caused severe smoke damage to the property next door and the families from both were forced to find alternative places to stay.

Watch Manager Andy Kelly, from Red Watch Kirkby, has kept in contact with the families involved and given them support in the aftermath of the incident. He said: "This fire was particularly difficult to reach and we were at the scene for a number of hours. Both families were outside watching what was happening so I spoke to them regularly throughout to keep them updated.

"It was a very sad incident. The residents of one house wanted us to retrieve some personal possessions and they lost near enough everything because they weren't insured. The neighbouring property was also badly affected and the family had to move out, and that included an 18-year-old with Spina Bifida who had to leave behind his specialist bed. That led to him developing bed sores and septicaemia and for a while he was on life support. Thankfully he is back home now with his family but it does show how fire can devastate. The incident really touched home, so I kept in touch with the residents involved to offer them support."

Ironically the fire happened in an area specifically targeted for Home Fire Safety Checks because it had a high risk of fire. As part of the Whatever it Takes campaign shortly before Christmas, Fire Support Network knocked on the door of every house in the road to encourage residents to get working smoke alarms for their property. Unfortunately the residents of this house were out at the time and didn't have a smoke alarm and never got around to responding to the leaflet left for them.

## ECO POND MAKES A SPLASH

An unused piece of land at Kirkby Fire Station is being transformed into a wildlife garden and eco-pond for the community to enjoy. Landscaping work is already well underway and over the next few months a walkway is to be added along with viewing/dipping platforms. Facilities will include a community resource room and it is hoped that it will provide an educational resource for local schools, youth and play groups.

There are currently no safe facilities of this kind in the Kirkby area. The intention is to use the pond to teach water safety to young children, whilst older children can learn about design, implementation and maintenance.

Funding has come from Local Solutions Network, Expanding Horizons and Community Foundation for Merseyside.



## NEW HFSC PILOT

Last month a new HFSC pilot scheme was started. One station in each of the districts is involved—E6 Kirkby Green, N1 Bootle/ Netherton Green, W3 Heswall LLAR, E1 St Helens White and C4 Low Hill Green.

The aim is to encourage staff to stretch HFSC targets, not just in terms of quantity but rather in quality so that more vulnerable communities are targeted. To measure the success of the initiative, a weighting scale has been set up that will be applied to each HFSC completed during the three month trial.

The project will also assess whether high performance in relation to HFSCs can be rewarded. MF&RS is currently considering what rewards can be offered.



## DAMAGE CONTROL OPEN DAY



MF&RS and ISS Arc, the Damage Control company, hosted an open day at the Training and Development Academy recently. Loss adjusters and continuity managers were asked to come along and find out more about the partnership between the two organisations and how they are helping businesses back on their feet following disasters like fire or flooding.

MF&RS gave a demonstration of fire behaviour, particularly flashovers, whilst ISS Arc brought along state of the art equipment so they could demonstrate how they are able to decontaminate buildings effectively.



# TRANSPORT NEWS

MF&RS has just taken delivery of a 15 tonne M.A.N. curtain sided lorry. This vehicle is going to be available for LGV training and meets all the new legislation for a driver training vehicle. It will also be used operationally for moving equipment, foam, or any other items required to be transported in times of emergency.

Workshops are getting back to normal following the bad weather earlier this year. The team were one of the casualties of the high winds in January when their roof blew off. But they were quickly up and running within 24 hours after relocating to the Training and Development Academy and Birkenhead. Now though, the roof repairs are being completed and Workshops have vacated the T&DA site and are operating as normal from Speke, although only half the workshops is being used until roof repairs have been completed— the workshops at W1 is still in operation.

A very intense electrical training course was recently completed by eight of the workshop Technicians. The course was overseen by a representative from the Institute of Road Transport Engineers, who commented on the high standard of the technicians taking part and the fact that the course was of such a high technical standard. He recommends that the course be given full accreditation and that the technicians should now be put forward for the Master technicians examinations.



## PUZZLE CORNER

	1	2	7					
		8	5	9	6	3		
3				1		4	5	7
	5			2			1	
7		1	4		3	6		2
	3			8			9	
9	2	5		4				6
		7	9	6	5	2		
					1	9	4	

Answer on page 10

## DIARY DATES

North West Fire Services Extrication Challenge.

Sat June 2—Cheshire FRS HQ

Contact : [nholmes@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:nholmes@cheshirefire.gov.uk)

11-17 June  
Carers Week

4-7 June  
Volunteering marketplace  
Knowsley district

# TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service has been working with various agencies across Merseyside to tackle anti-social behaviour. Various high profile operations have been taking place in different districts, giving out a clear message that criminal and anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated.

One of the recently targeted locations was the Sefton Coastline when there was a high visibility of officers patrolling the railways and coast. Members of MF&RS' Threat Response Group joined with Merseyside Police, British Transport Police, the National Trust and Sefton Council to crackdown on



unruly youths who intended to cause problems. It follows a series of incidents last year when members of the public faced violent and drunken behaviour, deliberate fires were lit in remote locations and general anti-social behaviour took place.

MF&RS Arson Reduction Advocates and the Anti-Social Behaviour Advocates were out and about in the pinewoods at Formby and the coastal area giving fire safety advice, particularly to people who were having barbecues.

A series of raids have also taken place in Wirral after residents complained about rowdy youths, fighting in the street, criminal damage and drug-dealing. Operation Respect was launched in Carrington Street and Randle Street, Birkenhead, with police blocking off roads and various officers descended on the area. MF&RS joined Police, Wirral Council, HM Customs and Excise, Trading Standards, RSPCA, Department of Work and Pensions and television licensing and other agencies who used all legislation

available to them to clampdown on criminal and anti-social behaviour. Fourteen addresses were targeted and eight arrests were made for various offences including drugs, handling stolen goods and abstracting electricity. MF&RS' new Anti-Social Behaviour Advocates offered support and reassurance to residents by knocking on every single door to give information and advice.

MF&RS is tackling these sorts of issues more and more with the development of the Anti-Social Behaviour Taskforce. This was set up last year and is a joint team made up of fire and police officers.

Group Manager Chris Case heads the team along with his counterpart from Merseyside Police Supt John Myles. GM Case said: "We believe specialist fire service staff working alongside the Police is the best way to tackle a wide range of issues facing many of our communities. We have already worked in partnership with the Police in other areas, such as arson, and this has delivered significant results. We believe it can do the same with the more complex issues surrounding anti-social behaviour."





# FIRE CAUSES ROAD CHAOS

A major route into Liverpool was forced to close after a fire in a disused engineering warehouse. When crews arrived at the building on West Derby Road, the ground and first floors along with the roof space were well alight.

Crews from Low Hill initially attended and were joined by firefighters from Liverpool City, including the aerial appliance. After cylinders were found on site, a number of acetylene cylinders and a 200 metre exclusion zone was set up, affecting rush hour traffic in and out of the City. Silver Command was set up at Police HQ to deal with the traffic management.

Once the cylinders were removed, crews searched the adjacent buildings as there were concerns that they were used by people sleeping rough. The Incident Investigation Team is looking into the fire.



## RETAINED AT N1

Earlier last month staffing changed on the 2nd pump at Bootle/Netherton. The crew now works 10am to 10pm on station and then 10pm til 10am on retained resilience.

Uniformed staff were asked if they would be willing to work the new system, which offers 20% extra pay and more flexibility. The team is completely self-rostering, ensuring that four people are always available for duty.

Much work has taken place between management and the FBU to agree the duty details, and it formed part of the Back to Work Agreement in October last year.

Those who volunteered for the new system asked if MF&RS management would change the shift patterns to 8-8 but due to the reluctance of the FBU, this request was denied.

The N11 crew are still working the traditional 2-2-4 system.

Crew Manager Nick McCormack is one of those working the retained system. He said: "The shifts fly by much quicker than the normal shifts on station. We cross all four watches because of the 10-10 hours, so we work with different managers and that helps to keep us busier than normal and also makes our day more varied.

"And of course at the end of the shift, I get to go home and sleep in my own bed!"



# NO SLINGS HERE

Steve Evens is a service trainer with North West Ambulance Service and has been delivering the First Person on Scene (FPOS) training at the Training and Development Academy for over a year.

Steve was asked about his thoughts of the course and said: "FPOS is wonderfully suited to the Firefighter as it is certainly more relevant to their role than the four day health and safety first aid at work course which is still relevant to those working in the office. Having the ability to keep a person alive until the arrival of the paramedic and being the vital link in the chain of survival must be a step in the right direction, not only for the patient but also for the Firefighter who in the past may have been frustrated by not having the appropriate life saving skills."

Steve went on to say: "FPOS has been well received by those who have attended the course by gaining impressive pass marks. I hope that I will have a long association with the Training and Development Academy as I believe that I have something to add to fire service training."

It is hoped that the majority of staff will be trained to this new standard in the near future.



## NEW BA EQUIPMENT



Most uniformed staff will have had the initial input by now on the pss100 set, Bodyguard 2 and the Merlin telemetry board.

These new pieces of equipment will be on the run in the next couple of months and when they do Merseyside will be once again at the cutting edge when it comes to fire and rescue technology.

The built in telemetry system within the bodyguard 2 distress signal unit in conjunction with the Merlin board will replace both the Radio Evacuation Distress system and also the separate rapid deployment board.

This system has been used successfully within the Northern Ireland Fire Service for more than four years and has proven itself to be very popular and user friendly.

# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

## Why are people being called in for a management interview over absence trends?

MF&RS is currently losing around 14,000 shifts a year due to sickness which in turn is having a knock-on affect on operational availability. It's a problem that is costing the taxpayer approximately £3m as we have to employ more staff in anticipation of people going off sick. The absence and attendance team are trying to address this problem by ensuring those who are genuinely sick receive the right pathway of care whilst those who are abusing the system are deterred. The current trend being assessed involves people who have been off at least three times in the last five years.

## With so many called in for interview, was the net cast too wide?

There had to be some form of criteria for the trend initiative. The Executive Leadership Team decided that three or more absences within five years was a reasonable starting point. Every line manager has the authority to remove individuals' names from the list if they thought it appropriate, for example exemptions have been made for people with welfare issues or underlying medical problems. More than half of those people interviewed have been removed from the list.

## This is likely to be a rolling programme, so what is going to happen in six months time. Could someone be called back in for interview for the same sickness period?

After the interview, some people have received a letter with conditions that may have been imposed (such as producing a doctor's note in the future) which remain in place for six months. This is likely to be a rolling initiative so people could be called in for a further management interview in the future if their absence is still a concern but each case is looked at individually and it's up to the Station/Locality Manager to decide whether to interview an individual.

**To submit a question for the next edition email [hotline@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:hotline@merseyfire.gov.uk)**

## PUZZLE ANSWER

5	1	2	7	3	4	8	6	9
4	7	8	5	9	6	3	2	1
3	6	9	8	1	2	4	5	7
8	5	4	6	2	9	7	1	3
7	9	1	4	5	3	6	8	2
2	3	6	1	8	7	5	9	4
9	2	5	3	4	8	1	7	6
1	4	7	9	6	5	2	3	8
6	8	3	2	7	1	9	4	5

Fire Service Direct has made its 50,000<sup>th</sup> appointment for a Home Fire Safety Check in the last 12 months. FSD is based at Service Headquarters. FSD has 20 full and part time staff.

Never before have 50,000 appointments been booked by phone in a 12 month period.

FSD has taken on a variety of new roles in the last year and is able to act as a signposting agent for many departments within MF&RS. This includes statistical and analytical reports to management. A future role for FSD is as registration agent for WFG 08.





## DOG WALKERS WANTED

Merseyside Fire Support Network is appealing for volunteers to walk one of their emergency response dogs.

Little Ern, a former rescue dog, was re-homed as part of an innovative project organised by the charity, and is trained to react on hearing a smoke alarm.



The two-year-old cross terrier, who now lives with his owner Betty Williams in Eastham, faced a series of assessment and training programmes and is now able, upon hearing the smoke alarm, to shut Betty and himself in a room, put a cloth against the bottom of the door to stop smoke coming through, contact Careline and bark once the emergency services have arrived so as they can be located easily.

The service is now looking for volunteer walkers to donate just one or two hours a week of their time to help give Little Ern the exercise he needs. Professional training will be provided and although a volunteer who lives in Eastham would be ideal, anyone who is willing to travel will have expenses paid to cover their costs.

Current walker Kevin Roberts said of Little Ern: "I really enjoy walking little Ern. He's a lovely dog with a great temperament and I would really encourage anyone considering volunteering to do so, it's such a worthwhile experience."

Anyone interested in walking Little Ern should contact Volunteer Services Officer, Isabelle Walker on 07837 113330.

## FSN PAINT PARTNERSHIP

The Fire Support Network (FSN) in Wirral has launched an innovative new scheme to supply free paint to homes that have been damaged by fire.

The charity carries out an After Fire Care service and as part of that it has founded a new partnership with 'LA21 Network', an organisation which collects left over paint and recycles it. This will aid people who have suffered a fire and do not have insurance to cover the cost of redecorating their home. People will now be supplied, free of charge, with enough paint to redecorate the affected area.

Dave York, a Team Leader from FSN who pioneered the partnership, said: "We decided to establish this partnership to help provide free paint to the victims of fire, and to help save them cost in redecorating if they are not insured. I find it very rewarding to always be able to do more to help people in need and I hope this service will be able to help a lot more people in the future."

Team Leader Stuart Jones, from FSN, added: "We have already had a great response from people when we have offered them the paint - and although we are not in a position to repaint the affected areas for customers, we can help them get their homes back to normal as quickly as possible"

Anyone requiring information about this service should contact Fire Support Network on 0151 296 4600.

# PETE PRICE JOINS CREWS

Radio City presenter Pete Price has been spending time with MF&RS so that he can do a number of shows highlighting the work of firefighters.

The radio station contacted the Fire Service initially to do a single show but when they were made aware of the scale of the role of a firefighter, they have decided to do a number of programmes throughout a week-long period.

Pete and his producer Jay have spent several days with operational staff in their different roles including time at Low Hill and Croxteth Community Fire Stations; the Search and Rescue Team, River Rescue team; the Training and Development Academy; Drive 2 Arrive; the AFA Motorbike; Parklands High School and MACC.

Pete said: "I wanted to find out what makes firefighters tick. We've been looking at all the different facets of the job and the issues they face.

"I have been amazed at what I have seen whilst I have been with the service, I never realised there was so much taking place in the Fire Service or how varied the role was. It's been an eye opener. And I have to say I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting everyone. Every single person has been so helpful and courteous. Thank you to everyone involved."

The shows will be aired during Pete's night time show (starts from 10pm on 96.7fm) in the near future.





## RISK MAPS IDENTIFY TARGET AREAS

Community Fire Safety is developing Risk Maps to help provide data about fires across Merseyside.

They are working with Process Evolution to create the new tool that will become a valuable way of targeting fire safety work.

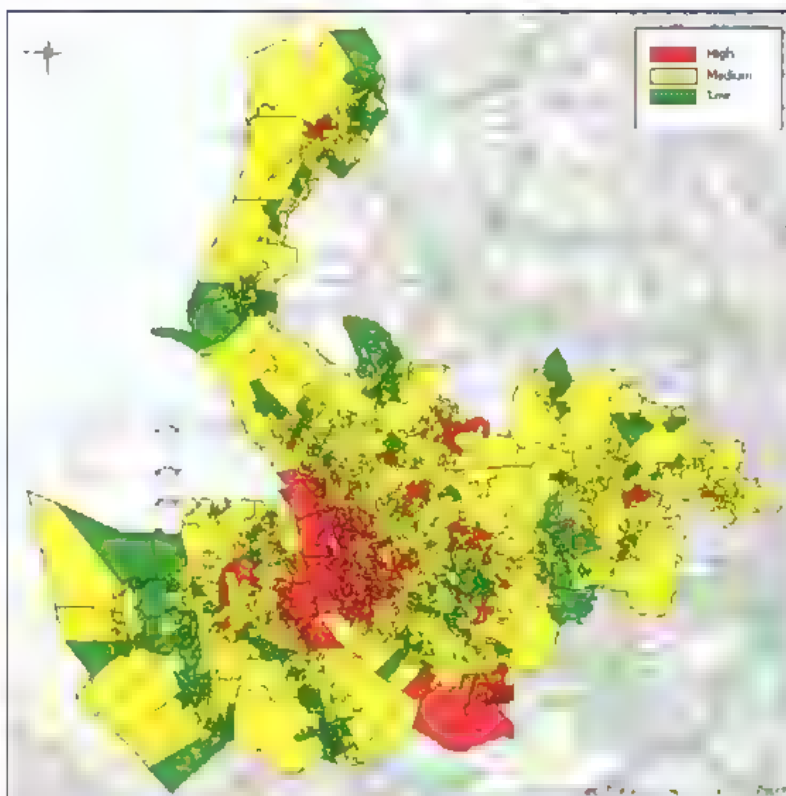
The maps will show where HFSCs are being carried out and also where fires are occurring in their area.

They will be updated quarterly, to give the most accurate information available to crews

One of this year's Integrated Risk Management Plan action points is to carry out intelligent targeting of Home Fire Safety Checks. The maps will help the Service to do that.

Until they are in place, stations are being provided with HFSC hotspot maps of station areas.

Stations will be able to use this intelligence to refine their HFSC process so ensure the Service is getting into the areas where fires are occurring.



## CARBON MONOXIDE INITIATIVE

Operational crews occasionally have enquired in the past about carbon monoxide detection and whether MF&RS have any involvement in this issue. In the past it has been an area we can signpost residents to the relevant support or help but now some districts are able to do even more.

Wirral Handyman Service has bought 1,000 carbon monoxide detectors that are being fitted into the homes of vulnerable residents. MF&RS, through Haydn Lipscombe, has set up a mutual referral scheme - the handyman service is passing on details of any households that need an HFSC, and MF&RS can refer residents who may need a carbon monoxide detector.

Kensington Regeneration is also hoping to reduce the issue of carbon monoxide poisoning. The organisation has bought over 500 detectors that will be fitted in the homes of Kensington residents. MF&RS has been working alongside them in developing this project and will be supporting them as the initiative is rolled out.

# CHAPLAIN ON THE RUN!

At the young age of 58, Bill Sanders was the oldest recruit to pass-out at the Training and Development Academy last year. But it would seem he has been allured by the life of a firefighter, as he has now joined White Watch at Low Hill to get some hands-on experience.

As MF&RS Chaplain, Bill is a familiar face to many uniformed staff but he felt he would be able to support them more if he was able to go through the challenges and experiences they endured. After completing the recruit course he asked permission to spend more time on the watches at different stations so he was able to learn more about the role of a firefighter and the issues they face. And whilst he was on station someone suggested he might like to complete his NVQ and he's jumped at the opportunity!

"I'm loving it," he said. "I initially wanted to build up some experience and Dave Elliott is acting as my mentor which is why I'm with White Watch at C4. I ride 5th man and am really enjoying it. The team are great and I'm enjoying working with them—I have even been on nights out with them now. I haven't been to any major incidents yet - they say I must be their lucky charm!"



Bill leading the recruits at the pass-out



So far Bill has been to car fires, small rubbish fires and the odd parrot stuck in a tree and still gets turned out to carry out his chaplaincy duties if there is a serious incident.

"My initial plan was to spend time with every watch on every station over the next two years and I still hope to do that," he said. "At the moment I have done a couple of shifts around the Service with different stations. I wanted to do that so that I could get to know the crews more.

"With the role I have as Chaplain, I have got to know the management and staff at HQ well but really the only time I got to see the uniformed staff was at serious incidents. The closer I am to the crews, the more likely they are to ask for my help and support when they need it, so I felt it was important to work with them more. Of course it is also helping me to understand what they are facing on a daily basis."

The varying shifts on station means that on occasions Bill has gone straight from church to the station and the exploits of the firefighters and the fire service are now finding the way into his sermons! He explains: "The congregation has been very supportive, they have a bit of a giggle about it sometimes but everyone has accepted it's now something that I do."

Bill embarked on a fitness challenge last year to get himself in shape for being a uniformed member of staff. He said: "I did a lot of training in the run up to the recruit course and I just got fitter and fitter as the course went on—I lost one and a half stone through it.

"I enjoyed every aspect of it. It was challenging and sometimes it tested me to the limits, physically and mentally, but it was worth the pain!"

So what does his family make of his new activity? "They know how much I have come to love the Fire Service and I don't think anything I do surprises them any more!"



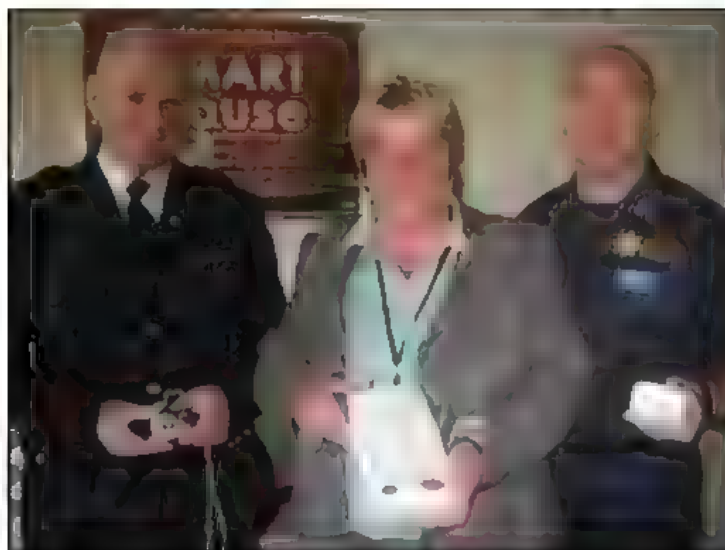
# THOUSANDS OF HFSCS SECURED

Wirral Community Fire Safety Team, led by Watch Manager Ian Girven, has secured more than 4,000 appointments for HFSCs from an at risk group who are monitored at their homes via a 24/7 call centre. These people are on the Lifeline system because they have issues that impact on their safety in the home. The referral list has been made possible by the close partnership work with Wirral Partnership Homes.

Wirral as a borough leads the way on reducing fire risk through the use of Assistive Technology (AT). This is possible by the partnership working of Social Services and the Popin Service. The technology is heavily backed by the Government to assist people to stay in their own homes rather than having to be placed in care. There are various AT devices that can be used that alert services to potential problems—these include smoke alarms that are linked directly to Lifeline but also more

advanced technology such as movement sensors and heat sensors. The technology reduces risk to vulnerable people and increases the speed of detection and reaction to that detection.

The technology is being showcased at a flat on Wirral which has recently opened its doors to all professional services that have a caring role within the community.



## OUTREACH FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Knowsley and St Helens CFS have established a series of partnerships that are helping to make vulnerable residents safe in their homes. These include IKAN and the Outreach for Older People group where various organisations join forces to offer comprehensive support that improves health and wellbeing.

There is a mutual referral scheme in place to ensure that a complete package of measures is offered – from free smoke alarms from the Fire Service to advice on benefits from the council or odd jobs from the handyman service. The partnership work is proving so successful that former Older Persons Advocate John Tuft has now been seconded into the IKAN team until March next year.

In St Helens, Natalie Parry has been providing an advice surgery at Helena Housing. As part of our partnership with them, they have volunteered to fund and fit deaf alarms for any of their tenants.

Ray Price, from Knowsley CFS, said: "We have all been working together to help residents maintain their independence. It's all about doing what we can to ensure residents can live in their own home."



## ARSONIST JAILED

A 22-year-old has been jailed for 21 months after deliberately setting light to a mobile classroom in Rock Ferry. Kevin Lloyd, of Wallasey, caused £15,000 worth of damage through the fire in September 2005. He recently appeared at Liverpool Crown Court where he pleaded guilty to arson.

Crews from Bromborough were called to Rock Ferry High School on September 22, 2005, and discovered a serious fire in a single storey, timber framed detached building that contained two classrooms.

The Incident Investigation Team looked into the fire with Crime Scene Investigators. Eddie Avis examined the building and found most of the fire damage was in the entrance way.

After excavating through the layer of fire debris he detected the smell of petrol. Further examination uncovered a soft drinks can containing the smell of petrol which was taken away by the Police for examination.

## SCHOOL FIRE

Firefighters tackled a fire at Rawson Road School, Seaforth after an arson attack on the disused building.

Two crews from Bootle/Netherton and Crosby were originally sent to the scene but more were mobilised after reports that there could be someone in the building. Further resources were mobilised after information that there was asbestos throughout the property. A full search of the building confirmed everyone was safely accounted for.

Two classrooms and the roof were involved in the fire and substantial damage was caused—with the room of origin severely damaged by fire and a further 11 rooms suffering smoke damage.



## REPARATION TEAM CLEAN-UP STATION

Jo-Anne Seddon has started a new role within the Youth Engagement team, co-ordinating the Reparation Community Hours for young offenders from Wirral Youth Justice System.

Groups of offenders, who are fully supervised, will be completing hours on all fire stations across the Wirral, alongside community work in the surrounding areas.

They are working in partnership with Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team to clear glass and rubbish left in parks by young people; working with Wirral Environmental Waste Service to paint NTL boxes (the black boxes by traffic lights) to help tackle graffiti; and supporting the work of Wirral RSPCA and Wirral Council dog compound.

On fire stations, they are helping to make a cleaner environment for the crews to work in. At Birkenhead the offenders have been working in the rear car park area and in the old hose room, clearing rubbish.



## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT KICKS-OFF



The Prince's Trust and EARLY teams held a football competition recently, involving all eight teams. The competition was run by Everton Football Club and was held at the Pitts on Scotland Road.

The competition is held three times a year to bring together

various youth engagement teams from across MF&RS and for the first time this event not only included matches but also a football-themed quiz.

The Knowsley team won the quiz whilst Speke won the football competition for the 4th time in succession.

Karen Metcalf said: "It was a fiercely fought competition but it was all played in good spirits!"





## TACTICAL EXERCISE IN SPEKE

MF&RS tested its Cloudburst response to a major emergency (Control Of Major Accident Hazards incident) at Blagdens, Spitfire Road, Speke, recently. Operational crews were faced with the scenario of a roof fire that had spread and collapsed into a sodium chlorate store, with people trapped inside. A Blue Light response went to the scene and Bronze, Silver and Gold command were also set up involving all the emergency services, Local Authority, Environment Agency, Health Advisory Team, Primary Care Trust, United Utilities, Health and Safety Executive and other agencies that could be linked to the site.

The chemical plant is one of eight locations in Merseyside where the Fire Service's COMAH off-site emergency plan has to be tested at least once every three years. The off-site plan is managed by the Contingency Planning Team, based at Bridle Road. They said a good partnership has been set up with the company which helped make the exercise a success.



## HORSING AROUND!

A horse in Eccleston had the last laugh when it sparked an emergency after getting stuck in a stable. Firefighters from the local station, the Search and Rescue Team and Station Manager Phil Garrigan were all mobilised to Howards Farm after being told the horse could die if he was not put in a standing position.

In a desperate attempt to get him back on his feet, the crew from Eccleston got air bags ready to place under the horse. But as the cylinders got turned on, the hiss caused the horse to panic and he jumped up suddenly and made it upright without any aids!

A spokesperson said the horse must have thought it was a snake—but at least his life was saved!

# THREE SERVICES TACKLE MILL FIRE

Firefighters from three counties fought a fire in a converted mill in Derbyshire.

About 90 firefighters were sent to Wren's Nest Mill in Glossop after a suspected arson attack.

The fire took hold of the roof and top floor of the building, causing damage to 70 flats. The mill was converted into



luxury flats about a year ago.

Firefighters were drafted in from Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire to support the crews from Derbyshire.

## FIRE DEATHS AT ALL TIME LOW

There have been significant reductions in the number of fire deaths and fires in England – including the North West. Initiatives and work from front line fire and rescue staff – control staff, firefighters, community safety officers – have helped to bring the number of fire deaths down.

Merseyside has already reported on its most successful year, with fewer fire deaths and injuries than ever before and this is a positive result that is being replicated across the country. In Cornwall, for the very first time the Brigade has reported no fire deaths at all during 2006/07.

The Audit Commission has revealed that:

Fire deaths in England have been halved since 1981.

Fires in England are at their lowest since 1988 - 140,300 now compared to the 2001 high of 188,400;

Fires in dwellings in England are at their lowest since 1984 and now stand at 46,600.

## NEWS FROM ELSEWHERE

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service have introduced 4X4 crews at their two pump stations. The changes are part of the service's Integrated Risk Management Plan. Fire chiefs said the surplus crew members are now being used to carry out fire prevention work in the community, giving advice, installing smoke alarms and meeting youngsters in schools.

Firefighters in Wales used a fire engine to take a stab victim to hospital. South Wales Fire and Rescue Service received a call to assist police with a male casualty in Maesteg. Firefighters responded and conveyed the casualty to hospital.

Devon and Somerset Fire Services have merged. Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service is now the largest non-metropolitan fire and rescue service in the country with a frontline of almost 2,000 uniformed staff and 200 support staff.

Cheshire Fire and Rescue is introducing a restful watch, replacing beds with reclining chairs. The move is designed to improve night time turnout times and modernise the organisation's approach to work routines in the evening.



# LOOKING BACK

Shown are firefighters tackling a blaze at Morganite Ceremacis in Bromborough.

The fire occurred on 31 October, 1984 and 13 appliances were sent to the scene, including three specials

It took an hour and a half to bring it under control. Ten main branches and an HP monitor were used to extinguish the blaze.



Brigade historian Simon Ryan has dug out these two photos from past recruit courses.



## FACTORY FIRE IN ROCK FERRY

Firefighters are shown as they tackle a factory fire in Russell Road, Rock Ferry. Crews were called to the scene on March 31 after smoke was seen coming from the rear of the building. The single storey fabrication shop was unoccupied and it is thought the fire was started deliberately.

The blaze was well alight when crews from Birkenhead arrived. The fire caused a partial roof collapse and left the building in a dangerous condition.



## SONAE RE-OPENS



Sonae UK's Kirkby plant re-opened, weeks after a severe fire. The factory on the Industrial Park in Knowsley is the UK's largest wood recycler but was forced to shut in early March following a fire in the oil pump room. Ten pumps, the aerial appliance, hose layer and foam tender were at the scene.

Due to the fire stop walls surrounding the pump room and quick intervention of firefighters, the fire did not spread to the main body of the factory but moderate fire damage was caused to a control room directly above the pump room.



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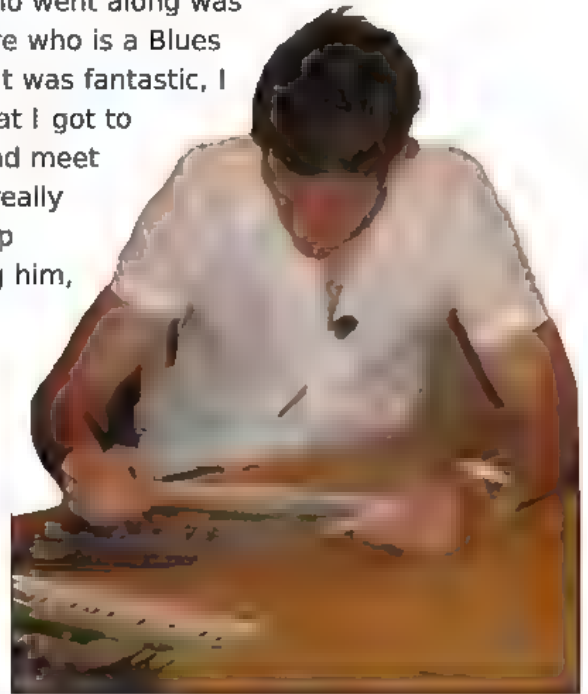
## A STRIKING PARTNERSHIP

The Prince's Trust Team at Old Swan were given the chance to grill Everton centre forward James Beattie recently. The team, made up of eight 16-20-year-olds, were invited to Goodison Park for a questions and answer session. They spent the morning preparing for their final presentation in the Extra Time facility where they dreamt up a series of questions—ranging from his performance during his career, his own thoughts on whether Everton should move their ground out of the city to what he did in his spare time.



Among those who went along was 20-year-old Clare who is a Blues fan. She said: "It was fantastic, I was made up that I got to go to Everton and meet James. He was really lovely. The group enjoyed meeting him, particularly the girls!"

The visit was filmed by Channel 5 who broadcast the visit during Thursday's Football Night.



## BEDROOM FIRE IN BIRKENHEAD

Wirral crews were called to Alexandra Road in Birkenhead to a fire in an attic bedroom.

The fire was confined to the room of origin and a search of the premises confirmed that everyone was safe and accounted for.

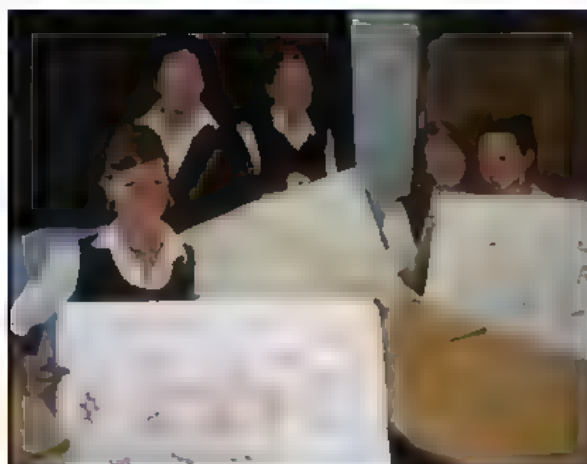
Firefighters from Birkenhead and Upton attended. Group Manager John Davies said they did a good job stopping the fire from spreading and minimising the damage to the other flats.



# TEENS CRASH COURSE ON SAFE DRIVING

Sarah Brosnan, School Liaison Officer, is running a 10 week driving programme with 6th form students from West Derby School, St John Bosco High School and De La Salle Humanities College. The aim of the programme is to allow the students to consider the necessary skills and attitudes for safe driving.

Instructors from the driving school BSM are also working with the students, giving them practical driving experience and introducing the Hazard Perception Test.



Sarah said: "We are all looking at ways of reducing RTCs involving young, inexperienced drivers. This is just one way we can have an impact on students' decision-making and attitudes—hopefully producing safer, more considerate drivers."



Merseyside Youth Association is also involved in the initiative and are working with the students on role-play exercises focusing on driver awareness. The students also visit the TADA to receive a demonstration of cutting people out of a vehicle.

BSM has donated 15 driving lessons as part of a city-wide poster competition highlighting young driver safety, passenger safety and pedestrian/cyclist safety.

## MISSING: DUCKY

Concern is growing about the whereabouts of a missing duck from the Bridle Road area. Last seen at Merseyside Fire and Rescue headquarters, 8-year-old Ducky has been missing since February.

Ducky is a notorious globe trotter, having travelled the world far and wide and has been known to go on several holidays each year. Family and friends became worried after he failed to return from his latest expedition. Owner Judy Murphy is desperate to know he is safe: "If Ducky has completed his holidays we really do need to know his whereabouts, we are very worried about him."



Ducky is described as being a quiet duck with yellow plastic and a bright orange beak.

Anyone with any information regarding Ducky's whereabouts should contact Judy Murphy on 0151 296 4106.



## SOUTHPORT SAVING LIVES

Last year Southport Community Fire Station held a charity abseil and bone marrow donor clinic to try and help two young children find a lifesaver. Sam and Ella Wright are still desperately in need of a bone marrow donor.

But the event at Southport still proved to be a life changing experience! Shakila Adhyaru, a 32-year-old children's nurse, joined the Anthony Nolan Trust Register in May last year after going along to Southport Fire Station and was found to be a match for someone.

For ethical reasons, donors are given very little information about the patient who receives their bone marrow, but donors can ask for regular updates through the Anthony Nolan Trust.



Shakila explains, "All I have been told is that my recipient is a young adult male from within the UK. Within 48 hours of my donation he would have received my bone marrow and then be in isolation for some time. The charity recently told me that he's now gone home from hospital which is wonderful news."

Shakila hopes that her story will encourage more people to join the Register. She said, "Donating bone marrow is not a difficult or painful experience and any discomfort that I felt was far outweighed by the knowledge that I was helping to save a life. The sense of achievement and overall reward is fantastic."

Another charity abseil and bone marrow donor clinic is being organised for June 23 in the hope that Sam (3) and Ella Wright (5) will find a match. Ella and Sam both have a rare immuno-deficiency which means that they susceptible to infections and viruses. While their conditions are currently being managed by a cocktail of drugs and antibiotics the only known cure is a bone marrow transplant. Despite searching the worldwide registers of 10 million potential donors a suitable match has still not been found.

## CHARITY SPLASH

Belle Vale, Low Hill, Southport & Upton Fire Stations managed to raise more than £1,400 for the BEN Fund after taking part in national Car Wash Day. Any other stations that took part are asked to bank the money as soon as possible.



The car wash at Southport



# FOOTBALL HEADS STATESIDE

MF&RS football team recently returned from the FDNY 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tournament. Twelve teams competed and during eight group games the results were as follows:

Merseyside	0-0	Hamburg	Merseyside	2-0	Barclays NY
Merseyside	0-2	FDNY	Merseyside	0-0	Rome Fire Dept
Merseyside	4-0	Italian Realtors	Merseyside	2-0	Vancouver
Merseyside	5-1	Italian Industrials	Merseyside	2-0	South Yorkshire

The results meant we finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place and progressed to face Rome again in the semi-finals. Rome pressed hard and we didn't settle into the game and lost 1-0 to a team that went on to play the FDNY in the final and eventually win the trophy on penalties.

The whole event was extremely well run and provided us with the opportunity to invite the Fire Services teams participating to come to Merseyside in 08 to play in the WFG08 football tournament. We also received invitations to enter the 2009 Police Fire Games in Vancouver and 2011 Police Fire Games in New York.



Peter Owens explains why we received an invitation to the Tournament: "In 2003 Low Hill took a team out as part of a civic visit. We played a game and handed a donation to the FDNY Sergio Villeneuve Scholarship Fund. Sergio, a firefighter, was their star player and sadly lost his life in the Twin Towers. The fund has now helped over a dozen students and the firefighters there have obviously not forgotten our contribution."

Roy Stewart, Football Team Manager, said: "We wanted to go out there and play some great football but it was just as important that we went there to tell everyone what a fantastic time they'll have if they come over here next year and take part in the Games."

"We'd also like to thank the Games organisation team and MBNA Bank for the contributions they made to ensure that the trip went ahead."





# STREETCAGE SOCCER SUCCESS

Streetcage Soccer ran its one month development programme at Kensington Sports centre in partnership with Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service.

The programme followed a highly successful project at Thelmere Street in Anfield with over 40 youths attending the event. It was a huge success with Streetcage Soccer running sessions on two out of the three pitches.

The programme was attended by 34 youths aged 9 – 17 who came along over the nine sessions, with youths getting the opportunity to learn exciting new skills and take part in some breathtaking exhibitions of football skills. These sessions were followed by mini-tournaments on both pitches.

The sessions were delivered by Streetcage Soccer's head coaching staff Matthew Shannon & David McDermott, who were extremely impressed with all the youths who attended the sessions and their desire to listen and learn to all coaching staff.

David McDermott said: "Streetcage Soccer and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service run a number of excellent programmes across Merseyside, however we have been extremely impressed by the attitude of all the youths who have attended these sessions.

They have also taken the important message regarding fires on board and we hope to see a positive change in the area."

The Streetcage Soccer sessions have also been supported by Kensington Firefighter, Ted Donnelly. Ted played a major part in the coaching sessions at the V-Streets in Anfield is now becoming a valued member of the partnership programme. He is extremely popular with all the youths and his positive message to youths about reducing fire has been very important.

Streetcage Soccer and Merseyside Fire & Rescue service is now working on developing programmes in this area and others across Merseyside. For more details on the programme, check out [www.Streetcagesoccer.co.uk](http://www.Streetcagesoccer.co.uk)





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